



**MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL HUNT & FLAT COMMITTEE
AT 75 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON
ON TUESDAY 3RD DECEMBER 2019**

Present:

Mr N Alexander	Mr J Boyle
Mr H Daly	Mr R Ingram
Mrs D Grissell	Miss E Johnson Houghton
Mrs T Hill	Hon H Palmer
Ms E Lavelle	
Mr J Moffatt	
Mr M Sheppard	
Miss S Smith	
Mr J Snowden	

In Attendance:

Mr R Arnold	
Mr G Noad	(NTF)
Mr M Fewell	(BHA)
Miss H Rochester	(BHA)

Apologies: Mr R Beckett, Mrs A Duffield, Mr J Gosden, Mr R Guest, Mr S Mullins, and Mr R Varian

ITEM 1 - Racing Futures

Martin Fewell and Harriet Rochester presented the Committee with an update from the Racing Futures project.

ITEM 2 - Fixtures and Funding

Non Standard Race Times

A proposal has been put forward to set races off at non standard times (not on a 5 or 0). The committees agreed the proposal. It was noted that all ITV races will have traditional times and all fixtures would start at traditional times. The Committee suggested more needed to be done to coordinate with Irish Racing.

Flat Racing Break

R Arnold asked how the flat break in November worked this year. H Palmer highlighted how it proved difficult due to the demand for all weather fixtures because of the heavy ground in October. H Daly highlighted how the jumps break took time to settle and suggested the Flat break will also need time to find the correct position. The Committee felt the later the break could be the better for the programme.

Minimum Values

This is a continuation of the discussion earlier in 2019 regarding a fall in executive contribution following the closure of betting shops. The choices facing horsemen are:

- reduction in minimum values
- reduction in the Appearance Money Scheme
- downgrading the programme

J Boyle felt the AMS scheme should remain in place due to the positive effect it has had for small owners. N Alexander suggested that any agreement reached over a reduction in total race values should only be agreed when there is transparency over media rights. R Arnold said that this will be included in prizemoney agreements.

The committee concluded that the NTF should be committed to keeping AMS and genuine transparency over the media rights deals.

Item 3 – Racecourse Matters

Non Runners on Going

R Arnold informed the Committee that a letter would be going out to trainers regarding the new rules on non runners. H Daly reiterated that 48 hour declarations has lead to more non runners and the harder they make it to have non runners then there will be fewer declarations.

R Arnold informed the committee of proposals put forward by other members of the going group, including having a trainer representative walk the course and only being able to withdraw on going when it has altered by a full point. E Johnson Houghton felt trainers do not always need to walk the course to asses the going. R Arnold felt it would be beneficial to have an additional trainer representative on the Going Group. R Carr suggested Steve Brown. N Alexander proposed that the NTF should be advocating going updates every day at 8:30. Furthermore the going stick should maintain its mandatory status.

Stables and Biosecurity

R Arnold reported that A Duffield joined the RCA Technical Group by conference call. The RCA proposed Trainers/Stable Staff to notify racecourses when they are bringing feed into the stables. A Duffield declined as staff would not do this and if the rule was brought then all staff would just say they have fed as a matter of practice.

A Duffield suggested that racecourses should put rubber flooring down and minimal bedding. The Racecourses provided the example of Leicester who spend £6k a year on bedding and putting down rubber flooring would cost £70k. Therefore it would be an 12 year payback on the investment. R Arnold asked if there was a better short term solution. The Committee concluded that the onus should be on the racecourses to find out if the horse has been fed and there should be a box to tick on the signing in sheet in the stable managers office.

Equine Vision

R Arnold reported that the trial of florescent paint on fences was not rolled out across Point to Point tracks and some members of the sport have suggested that as the research is there to roll it out for 2020/21 season. N Alexander suggested that the sport had other priorities. E Lavelle highlighted that it was a positive news story not just in the sports pages and it was worth exploring. The Committee concluded that more research was required, specifically if Hexham had a lower than average faller rate.

Padded Hurdles

The Committee agreed that the majority of trainers supported racecourses using padded hurdles. It was noted that the trial of the hurdle had ended and they were now an official option in the BHAGI. However it was suggested that the wider membership should be consulted before they are rolled out to all racecourses as some trainers have expressed concerns over injuries to the front of the cannon bone.

Item 4 - Race Planning

Merge of Auction and Median Auction

R Arnold informed the Committee that most of the feedback from the Regional Meetings had been positive towards merging auction and median auction races. Following this the Racing Group approved the proposal however the Group asked for a direction from the NTF if this should be introduced in 2020 or 2021. J Boyle and R Ingram felt the proposal should be introduced in 2020. However E Johnson Houghton and H Palmer had reservation around the proposal and suggested it should be delayed until 2021 to allow buyers to modify their purchases. R Arnold concluded that a vote should be taken among the full NTF Flat Committee to decide the position.

Optional Claiming Handicaps

R Arnold highlighted that despite poor field sizes Optional Claiming Handicaps would be maintained for 2020.

Jump Race Classification

R Arnold reported that following positive feedback from the Regional Meetings the reclassification of 0-105 to C15 has been approved by the Racing Group. This will be introduced for Programme Book 2.

All Weather

H Palmer suggested an all weather programme book should be published. E Johnson Houghton expressed how the all weather programme was not meeting the demand of the horse population because horses were getting balloted out multiple times.

UPDATE: The Fixtures and Funding Group have approved a new divided race fund and every all weather racecourses has agreed so divisions will start again in 2020.

The next meeting will be in April 2020